WALKING SCHOOL BUS POLICY AND GUIDELINES

FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

It is our responsibility to ensure your children are collected from their school and walked safely to the programme premises. Our staff have all read, understood and signed a Walking School Bus Policy outlining mandatory rules and responsibilities. The following outlines the policies and measures we take.

1. Before leaving the Centre all staff have with them the following:
* Cellphone
* Folder with Contact Details of all parents and medical details of all children and Daily Attendance Sheet
* Safety Vests (enough for each child)
* Adult Safety Vests
* Umbrellas if weather permits
1. Where there are more than 8 children an additional staff member is required to assist with collection and supervision to ensure approved 1:8 ratio.
2. Staff will leave 10 minutes prior to school finishing time, to walk from the Church Street Centre to the designated school (either Northcote Primary or St Mary’s Primary) ensuring they arrive at the school prior to the bell ringing.
3. Staff will meet the children in the designated meeting area (see attached photographs) ensuring they are visible.
4. In terms 1 and 4 children and staff are required to wear sun hats.
5. Staff will ensure children wear shoes and vests, bags are zipped up and hats are worn. Staff will assist and encourage.
6. Staff will ensure vests are worn over the tops of bags where possible.
7. Each day before leaving school premises, staff will remind the children about the importance of listening, not running and keeping together. The children **Must** walk in pairs, but don’t have to hold onto hands, often children feel uncomfortable doing this.
8. Staff will reiterate the importance of listening, not running and staying together as they approach Onewa Road. Children must not wait at the lights right next to the road or on the kerb, but to wait 2 steps back from the road/lights.
9. If there is already a large group of children at the lights (ie another after school programme) staff will ensure children wait and take the next lights to make it safer and easier.
10. Children are to cross at the lights keeping behind the staff member and in their pairs at all times. Where there is more than 8 children, a staff member will be at the front and the other staff member at the back of the line.
11. Children to walk on the safe side of the footpath, the staff member/s to walk closest to the roadside.
12. Staff to check driveways before the group approaches to safeguard from vehicles and to reinforce that children must also stop and look.
13. Entering and crossing the carpark at the programme premises must be done with caution. Staff will ensure a clear passage before entering or crossing and have the children remain in their pairs. Staff will ensure children listen and do not run.
14. A head count of the children will be done 3 times during the Walking School Bus Collection. Once on arrival at the meeting place, once before exiting the school grounds and once more before entering the programme premises.

Any incidents will be reported and parents contacted accordingly (depending on the seriousness) Any children deemed missing (on the attendance list but no where in site) appropriate measures will be taken as per our Health and Safety Policy and Procedures (Please see below)

 *After school care policy:*

If a child who is expected at the programme has not arrived:

* Staff will consult immediately with school personnel to ascertain if the child was at school and their whereabouts.
* If the child is missing an immediate search will be conducted of school grounds and immediate locality.
* The programme supervisor will be notified and consulted about next steps.
* If the child is not found, parents and/or emergency contacts for the child will be contacted.
* Programme management will be notified of the situation.
* The supervisor may also follow up on information and conduct a wider search e.g. along the route to the child’s home.
* If the child can still not be located, the Police will be notified.

Once the child is located the supervisor will follow up with the parents to investigate why the incident occurred and take steps to prevent it occurring again. If necessary, parents will be reminded to notify the programme of any change in bookings/attendance.

Parents are expected to inform the supervisor if they will be dropping children off late or picking them up early. If the group is not in the Centre (e.g. outdoors in playground) parents must make sure that the staff know their child has been dropped off. When the group leaves the Centre a note will be left describing their whereabouts.

Please sign below if you give permission for Mi Casa ASC Staff to walk your child from their school premises to the programme premises, following the above rules and policies.

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Parent or Caregiver)

Give permission for my child/ren \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To be transported via the Walking School Bus outlined above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent or Caregiver)